

emergency authorities to respond to this threat.

GEORGE W. BUSH.
THE WHITE HOUSE, June 19, 2007.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, on Friday of last week, the House took up 26 sequential votes on amendments to the 2008 Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, H.R. 2638. The fourth of these votes was on an amendment by the gentlelady from Virginia, Representative DRAKE, which increased funding for the Immigration and Customs Enforcement's 287(g) program. This program funds training and activity of State and local law enforcement personnel to carry out Federal immigration law. I believe that immigration law is and should be the responsibility of Federal border and Customs officials, and not delegated to the States and local authorities who are already burdened with protecting their communities. I, therefore, do not support the Drake amendment.

On roll number 469 when I cast my vote on this amendment, however, an "aye" vote was recorded when a "no" vote should have been recorded.

ENERGY AND WATER

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, we have been engaging in discussion on the appropriations regarding the Energy and Water bill. Much of our attention has been on the gas prices, which is clearly a key element of need for the American people. I believe that when we finish this bill, we will have a strong and positive response.

But at the same time, water is a concern for the American people as well. Flooding is a concern for the American people as well. I use as an example the City of Houston, Texas, that has just received the flood mapping that goes on under the process of FEMA, meaning that they have described areas of residential housing where the maps are changing what is a flooding area and what is not.

The tragedy for Houston is that these are older neighborhoods where Members of the community have invested in one of their major assets. Unfortunately, based upon FEMA's maps and the lack of infrastructure as it relates to water and flooding, these individuals are finding themselves without the opportunity to protect their property. We have got to change that. We have got to make a difference. I look forward to working with my constituents to do so.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WALZ of Minnesota). Under the Speak-

er's announced policy of January 18, 2007, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. KILPATRICK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. KILPATRICK addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

EDUCATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. JONES of Ohio) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I am glad to join my colleagues from the Congressional Black Caucus this evening in a special order around education. Today, we celebrate Juneteenth, also known as Freedom Day or Emancipation Day. This holiday, celebrated in 14 states, commemorates the announcement of the abolition of slavery in Texas.

This day was a great milestone in American history. Since that time, African-Americans have made great strides in this country. However, even with those great accomplishments, we still find ourselves dealing with glaring disparities in our educational system in this country. It is time that we stop ignoring this issue and bring it to the forefront of our policy discussions.

As our world becomes increasingly interdependent, we as a Federal Government have a responsibility to provide all of our citizens with an education that will allow them to compete and excel in the global market.

Sadly, this is not the case. Too many of our minority and economically disadvantaged students are not equipped with the kind of education that will allow them to earn a decent living in order to enjoy American prosperity.

In a free society like ours, we justify the unequal distribution of wealth by equal opportunity. However, any reasonable person will tell you that opportunities are certainly not equal. Therefore, I hold a strong belief that it is the responsibility of Congress to make policy that provides the most underprivileged along with an opportunity to succeed.

We can do this by promoting policies that ensure a strong public education system does not leave any child behind. We need to make a strong commitment to our educational system. Our posterity is depending on it.

My home is Cleveland, Ohio, and unfortunately it has been rated as one of the poorest cities, where almost half of the children live below the poverty line. It has been proven again and again that there is a direct correlation between economic prosperity and education. It has also proven that good

teachers make good schools. But it's so difficult to attract qualified teachers to impoverished areas.

No Child Left Behind requires that every State and school district ensure that low-income students have their fair share of qualified and experienced teachers. In high poverty districts in Ohio, 42 percent of the teachers teach classes outside of their expertise. This is problematic, because studies have shown that multiple bad experiences with teachers can negatively impact their students' education. We need to work hard to get quality teachers to high-risk schools so we do not let many teachers slip through the cracks.

Another disturbing fact is that only 51 percent of African-American students graduate from high school on time in Ohio. This last year, Cleveland municipal schools only graduated 40 percent of their senior class. This is a blatant failure of our education policy. This problem has no simple solution.

We are talking about inner-city schools with a lack of resources and crumbling infrastructure. We are talking about environments where juvenile delinquency is the norm and some students fear attending class, where budgets are stretched so thin and there is no money available for arts and education and extracurricular activities.

These are schools where classes are overcrowded and the teachers are overwhelmed and forced to teach from outdated text books, and the list goes on. This is not what we intended for our students. We have an obligation to correct this wrong. We need to do more to assist these schools in securing resources that will allow them to lift these students up and provide them with an education that will allow them to continue on to college and to a good-paying job.

It is so easy for Members of Congress to demagog "No Child Left Behind." But many of us have supported the policy, and its intention is benevolent. We as a country need to strive for academic excellence and opportunity in our country. It has been a tremendously difficult policy to implement and administer, but we cannot give up on it.

We have a complicated primary and secondary education system with responsibility spread through all levels of government. To reach a high level of educational opportunity nationally is a paramount task, but we must persevere. The system already works for haves, and we have an obligation to see it work for the have-nots.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. POE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)